



Physical Activity Resources

Proposed steps to making a your school's Walk to School Day a success!



- 1) **Register** with the National Walk to School Day at www.walktoschool-usa.org as soon as possible. This will enable schools to get new information quickly, and allow others to know our community is having an event.
- 2) **Contact** Jane Lambert at 801-455-4170, or send registration information to janelambert@utah.gov.
- 3) **Conduct a walkability study** ahead of time to determine where community improvements could be made, and to map out the safest ways for students to walk to school. Work with principal, safety and transportation officials in the community, as well as parents and PTA leaders in providing adult supervision along these walkways, and to advertise the starting point as a “safe drop off point” for parents driving their students to school. Designate one of these paths as a Gold Medal Mile if you are interested in becoming a Gold Medal School. You can combine your Walk to School Day activities with a Gold Medal Mile Walk for a fun activity.
- 4) **Contact** key authorities in your community to let them know what day in October you will be holding your Walk to School activities. Inform the mayor or city council; school superintendents and principals; parent/teacher organizations; the police department; and public health officials (for example the county health department). Make them aware of the National Walk Our Children to School event, let them know citizens care, and garner their support.
- 5) **Invite** plenty of public officials to walk to school with you, and get the mayor or other members of city government to officially declare Walk to School Day in your community. Urge them to take part, with their own children or others, on the day when leaders across the country will be walking. Get the mayor's public relations office interested and involved. Ask the mayor to sign a proclamation declaring the first Wednesday in October as “Walk Our Children to School Day” in your community.
- 6) **Make principals and teachers aware** of the educational and safety material available. Distribute materials related to "safe walking" instruction, measuring and mapping safe-routes-to-school, and the health benefits of regular physical activity such as a brisk, daily walk.

- 7) **Approach** businesses a mile or so from school to request their parking lots as an intermediate parking/drop-off spot. This allows everyone to participate: faculty, students, and parents who live too far to walk can park there and walk the remaining distance to school; buses could even drop-off there. The ultimate goal could be an empty parking lot at school!
- 8) **Approach** other local businesses for sponsorships. Ask them to help provide juice and bagels for walkers' breakfast at schools, reflective tape for jackets and book bags, materials for posters and fliers, or little prizes (pens, shoelaces) for walkers.
- 9) **Provide** media coverage. Create a press release. Get local media to make public service announcements urging parents to walk and drivers to be cautious.
- 10) **Send** letters home to parents. Be sure letters to parents are sent home with students well in advance of the event, and be sure it's announced daily at school the week before. Kids forget.
- 11) **Keep** students and parents walking! Provide schools with a family activity program to encourage them to continue being physically active, and to encourage parents to walk with their children to school on a regular basis. Offer a prize to those families who participate in a program of regular exercise for one month following our **Walk Our Children to School Day** event.

